

History of

Victory Chapel

Biddeford, Maine

**By: Bro. Daniel T. Rideout
2016**

Around the late 1950's / early 1960's, Bro. F. Harold Bickford held Pentecostal Meetings at the old Advent Christian Church on Hill Street in Biddeford, Maine. Bro. Bickford was an Old-Fashioned, Full Gospel, Pentecostal, Holiness Pioneer. Bro. Bickford was apparently pastoring a Work there, about the same time, that Bro. Russell K. Pier came to Old Orchard Beach, and started Faith Tabernacle & Faith School Of Theology. Faith School Of Theology was opened in 1959.

In 1964, at age 25, Bro. E. Terry Courtney got a Burden for Biddeford, Maine. As a student at Faith School, he would walk all the way to Biddeford from Old Orchard, in those early days.

The Full Gospel Assembly of Biddeford was started on Water Street, in a building Bro. Courtney said only cost \$25.00 a month. Then eventually, as the Work progressed, With God's Help ONLY, the congregation moved to 480 Main Street.

[**Notes on Arundel:** At some point, Bro. Courtney felt Led of The Lord to go to Arundel and start a Work there. The Arundel Full Gospel Assembly was born. The basement was put in, and later the Work was turned over to Bro. Donald Gray. And the upstairs was completed. After awhile, the Work in Arundel was turned over to Bro. Walter Smith. Later, Bro. John Archer.]

After 7 years, Bro. Raymond Brooks took over the Work at Biddeford, and stayed a few years. Then, God Sent Bro. Bernard Elliott to Biddeford, Me.

[**Notes on Bro. Bernard Elliott:** Bro. Elliott & his wife Sis. Evelyn graduated from Zion Bible Institute. Even from the days of being fresh-out-of-Bible-School to the present, they have always "(...addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)"-- 1st Corinthians 16:15 kjv. With God's Help ONLY, they pastored/pioneered Works also in Thorndike, Edgecomb, Auburn, N. Monmouth, & established The Auburn Bible Institute, while there.]

Bro. Elliott had a Coffee House Ministry for years. During his tenure in Biddeford, he had one upstairs near where Alex's Pizza is today. It was during this time, Bro. Elliott felt Led of The Lord to purchase the old Advent Christian Church, there on Hill Street, for the church home. His son, Bro. Mark recalls his dad wanting this with all his heart! Bro. Elliott's son, Tommy had a car that he sold, and gave his dad the money for the downpayment on the church.

So, about 1973, the building was purchased and the congregation in Biddeford moved once again, to it's own, new home at what is now known as, 67 Hill Street. There was no parsonage for the church, so the church purchased the house behind the building, at 10 Chapel Street, for the parsonage, during that time.

[More notes on Bro. Bernard Elliott: At some point, God Sent Bro. Elliott to Arundel to take over the Work there. He became the 5th pastor of that Assembly. With God's Help ONLY, the building was built onto in the back, making a large platform area, under Bro. Elliott's leadership. During that time, Bro. Elliott's son Bro. Mark suggested a new name for the Work. A vote was made, and his name was chosen. So, the Work was renamed "Arundel Christian Tabernacle." Bro. Elliott wanted to go to Florida, but God told him: "The Revival will be in Maine!" (This was Bro. & Sis. Elliott's 7th Work in The Gospel Ministry.) After some failing health issues, Bro. & Sis. Elliott have STILL held on to The Promises Of God. "For all The Promises Of God In Him are Yea, and In Him Amen, unto The Glory Of God by us." – 2nd Corinthians 1:20 kjv. (Bro. & Sis. Elliott are both also Old-Fashioned, Pentecostal Pioneers.) In the meantime, With God's Help ONLY, Sis. Elliott kept the Work going, and pastored there for quite sometime, herself. Later, Bro. Mark Elliott took the helm. Bro. Mark has a Vision, and reaches out to the community. They had an outreach center built onto the right side of the building, and once again the Work was renamed "Hillside Chapel." **Writer's Note:** With God's Permission, i'd like to add one more comment, if i may. A few years ago, when Sis. Elliot was pastoring the Work, I felt Led Of The Lord to bring out Psalm 111, because they are on Route #111, AND the fact that the Work, at that time, was called The Arundel Christian Tabernacle, they were The Arundel Christian Tabernacle Saints. (Thus, The ACTS of the Apostles.) Now, Bro. Elliott said he always wanted to change the name of the Work to: The Arundel Revival Center, even though this is a "C" and not a K, There is Significance Spiritually to theses names. **The Ark IS Coming Up The Road, HALLELUJAH!!** "Where there is no vision, the people perish:..." – Proverbs 29:18 kjv.]

In Biddeford, Bro. Herbert Wilcox was voted in as the next pastor. He stayed on for a while. Then, Bro. Phillip Glidden pastored the Work a short time.

In 1982, Bro. Joel A. McLain, Sr., was Chosen of God, to be the next shepherd of this local flock. With God's Help ONLY, he and his dear wife, Laboured Faithfully for The Lord at Biddeford. Also, With God's Help during his pastorship in Biddeford, his son Bro. Tim built a beautiful, new, large altar in the Sanctuary, and the Work was renamed: "Victory Chapel." Many things could be written, For God's Glory ALONE on this special place, but all the books could not contain it. It is Indeed a Lighthouse on the hill, For The Glory Of ALL-MIGHTY God!!!! The parsonage at 10 Chapel Street was also rebought, apparently after being sold at some point. After, Bro. McLain, went on to his Reward, and laid his Armour down in 2013, his son, Bro. Phillip McLain, Sr., was elected as the new pastor. He has a real Vision and Burden for the lost and hurting! We are awaiting a Great Future In God, For HIS Glory!!!! Amen.

[Notes on Bro. Joel A. McLain, Sr.: With God's Help ONLY, Bro. McLain, had pastored / pioneered several church Works, before coming to Victory Chapel. Only to name some we remember: Newburgh [possibly 2 Works (at different times) there], Dixmont, Patten Pentecostal Church, & Waterboro. Bro. McLain was TRULY an Old Fashioned, Pentecostal, Holiness Pioneer AND Teacher of The Faith.]

Notes on Bro. E. Terry Courtney – Bro. Courtney said God Gave him a Scripture when he went to Arundel. It seemed like maybe all odds was against it. A man donated the land for the church, and then others said he shouldn't have given them the land. Never-the-less, after much deliberation and opposition, God triumphed!!!! AS HE ALWAYS DOES NO MATTER WHAT!!! The Apostle Paul was hindered at times too, But God IS Faithful!!!!

The Scripture God Gave Bro. Courtney is found in Psalms 78:19. The Scripture Declares: "Yea they spake against God, they said, Can God Furnish a table in the wilderness?"

When people fight against God's people, they are fighting against God Himself!!!

Bro. Courtney eventually was Led of God to go to Wells, Maine. About 1975, With God's Help ONLY, Bro. Courtney purchased the old Wells Pentecostal Church on Route #9A. (This was the same Work God Used Sis. Lula & Bro. Rankine Nicholson to Establish years ago.)

During Bro. Courtney's tenure there, he has built onto the back of the building, creating a larger altar space and platform area. The Work was renamed: "Mt. Zion Chapel Pentecostal Church." Many other things could be mentioned, but time does not permit us.

Proverbs 22:28kjv reads: "Remove not the ancient Landmark, which thy fathers have set."

The purpose of this writing IS NOT to offend anyone, but to try to Remember With God's Help, For HIS GLORY ALONE, What He has done for us, and captivate a record to help people to remember how it all began, and who God Used.

Bro. Russell & Sis. Doris Pier; Bro. Clieve Meihdahl; Bro. Calvin Rogers; Bro. F. Harold Bickford; Bro. E. Terry Courtney; Bro. Raymond Brooks; Bro. Bernard & Sis. Evelyn Elliott; Bro. Donald Gray; Bro. Walter Smith; Sis. Daisy Leavitt; Bro. Rankine & Sis. Lula Nicholson; Bro. Alfred Bradstreet; Sis. Whittemore; Sis. Ames; Bro. & Sis. Joel McLain; Sis. Christine Gibson; are a few of the old-time Soldiers of The Cross & Pioneers of The Old Fashioned Pentecostal Faith in York County, remembered!

Let's not forget them, AND REMEMBER to Give God ALL The Glory for Their Labours & His Callings AND Enablements!!

In 1957 Brother Russell K. Pier established a church at Old Orchard. In 1971 he gave the following tribute to Brother Harold Bickford: "For several years Elder F. Harold Bickford and his late wife, Norma, regularly attended the Church I pastored in Old Orchard Beach, Maine. It was a little strange to a young preacher to have two older ministers in his congregation. However, the friendliness of both Elder Bickford and his wife soon relieved any fears I had. I never had people work so wholeheartedly with the Church and pastor in their faithful attendance, giving, prayers, testimonies, and attitudes than the Bickfords. I received nothing but encouragement from the Elder during the time we were engaged in the work together. One of his favorite sayings to me was, 'Go it while you are young, boy, go it while you are young.' The Elder was always willing and ready for any assignment in the church. He never said *No* to any request that was made from me as his pastor.

"It was inspiring to watch his vision for home missions. Since we both shared the same ambition to reach new communities with the Full Gospel, we had a chance for a great deal of fellowship. His undaunted faith to see a Full Gospel church started in Biddeford, Maine, would have been an inspiration to any young preacher. A community 95% Catholic and the fifth largest city in the State of Maine that had never had a Full Gospel work was a challenge to him. Though the vision tarried, he waited patiently. I know he has been a blessing to our graduate, Pastor Terry Courtney, who finally established a work in the city of Biddeford. The Elder never quits—he just keeps on believing. Should he leave us before the coming of the Lord, we will never say he died. Like all old souls, he will only fade away. His inspiration, dedication, and exemplary life will be with us till Jesus comes. It has been a pleasure to know him and be influenced by his life."

In 1971 Brother Patton writes: "I have worked with Brother Bickford for a great many years in the Full Gospel Ministerial Fellowship, Home Missions, and the Bridgewater Campground. Now Brother Bickford is past 82 years of age, with reasonable health, keen mind, and on the move, assisting at Biddeford, Maine and the Southern Maine Home Missions district. He is a Godly man and a good soldier of the Cross."

The September 12, 1969 Home Missions service was held in Biddeford, Maine. Brother Bickford attended this gathering and reported on it, as follows: "This was an evening service in the new home of the Full Gospel Assembly here at 480 Main Street. It was opened by President Alward of the Apostolic Challenge. Bro. Forrest Peaco led the songs. The testimonies were led by Brother Blackstone. They had three special songs sung by various ones. Over \$100 was raised for the new church home here. Brother Alward brought us a blessed message from Numbers 22:1-32. His subject was, 'The Consequence of Compromise.' Notes taken by Brother Bickford: 'God's Word never fails. Man will fail, but God, never! When we feel strong then are we the weakest. You can backslide over very small things. You will be in the minority if you take a firm stand for the Lord Jesus Christ.' This was a very precious message."

1969
"BLESSED REVIVAL SERVICES—Biddeford, Maine. Over the weekend of September 19-21, God was good to send Brother and Sister Russell K. Pier (and little Dorene Joy) of the Faith School of Theology in Brooklin, Maine for some special services in Arundel and Biddeford. The meetings were Friday and Saturday nights and Sunday afternoon in the new basement church building in Arundel, and Sunday afternoon and evening in the newly-purchased building in Biddeford at 480 Main Street. The Friday night meeting was a youth rally under the direction of the area director, Brother Bernard Blackstone of Monmouth. A good company was present. Sister Esther Davis sang a lovely Gospel song. Brother William Green of Waterboro sang, 'Until You've Known the Love of God.' Caroline Smith and Rosanna Wilkins of Waterboro sang, 'Yesterday.' Sister Pier and daughter, Dorene, sang, 'God is Love.' Sister Pier gave one of her lovely testimonies and then sang, 'I'm His to Command.' Brother Pier brought us one of his soul-thrilling messages from Matthew 7:13. His subject was 'Choosing.' It was a most blessed service. At the Sunday evening service in Biddeford one backslider came to the Lord to be reclaimed. She has shown fruits of salvation since."

On September 28 Brother Bickford reported on another service held at Biddeford: "Sunday evening, September 28, was outstanding in the new home of the Full Gospel Assembly in Biddeford. Some forty or fifty gathered for the regular service. Bro. Courtney brought us a profitable and stirring message on 'The World, the Flesh and the Devil.' Then he asked all to come to the front to wait on God. The meeting was not dismissed, but God was present to pour out His Spirit. About 25 remained until after 10:30. Some were slain in the Spirit, others were dancing and being blessed with holy laughter in different parts of the room. It was just wonderful. One unsaved man, as he went out, asked for prayers. Let us remember him. God is surely blessing in the new home of the Full Gospel here."

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**Advent Christian Church
1955**

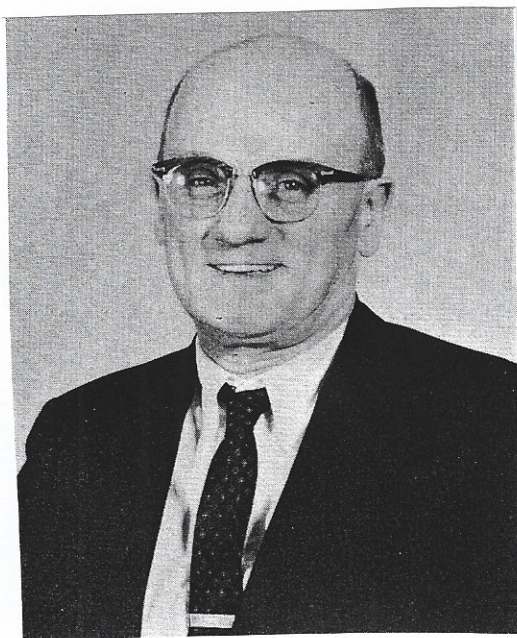
Hill Street Biddeford, Maine

(Built by the Adventists in 1866/1867 & remodeled 30 years later)

**Now:
Victory Chapel
(A Full Gospel, Independent, Holiness, Pentecostal Church)**



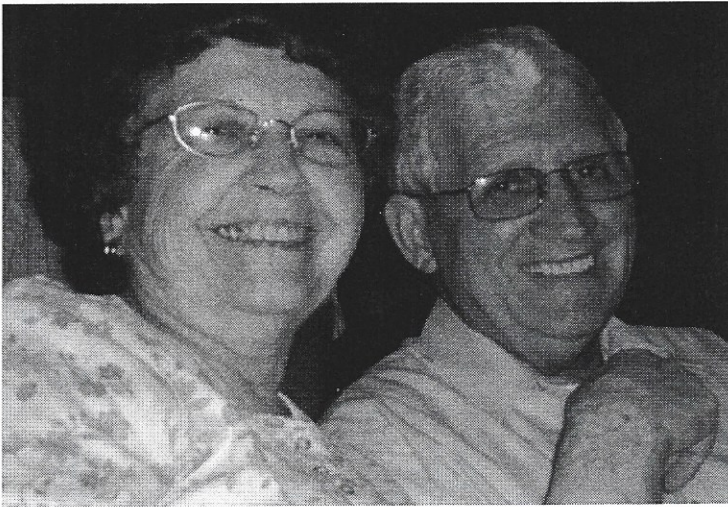
Rev. E. Terry Courtney



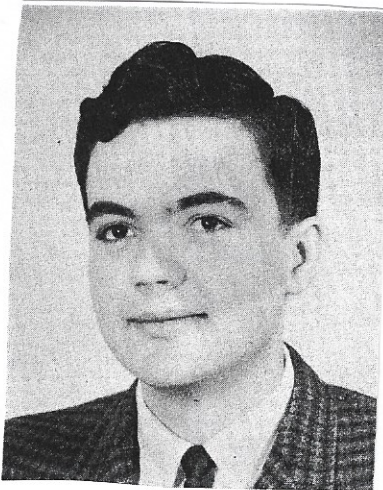
Rev. Raymond Brooks



Reverends Bernard & Evelyn Elliott



Rev. Herbie Wilcox



Rev. Philip G. Fiddka



Rev. Joel McLain, Sr.